



THE HARBOR

***The Harbor***  
by Ernest Poole (1880–1950)

Published in 1915, *The Harbor* is considered to be one of Poole's best efforts. *The Harbor* is a fictional account of life on a Brooklyn waterfront through the eyes of Billy as he is growing up. The novel starts with Billy the child, living on the harbor with his father, mother, and sister, Sue. His hard-working father owns a shipping business, and can think of little else. As a young man, Billy begins to detest the harbor and longs for escape to pursue his lifelong dream of becoming a writer and avoiding his father's business. With his mother's blessing, he takes flight to Paris to hone his trade. While in Paris, he meets Joe Kramer (J.K.) and a sometimes stormy relationship begins. J.K. forces him to confront human situations that Billy would prefer to ignore. Billy eventually returns to the harbor and recognizes that changes are taking place in the harbor -- and in his life. As his attitude about the harbor begins to evolve, it becomes a subject for his writing and his personal relationships. Throughout the novel, J.K. continues to make appearances in Billy's life, challenging him to write about things as they really are and not as Billy's world of comfort shows them to be. Billy's life is changed when the harbor goes on strike and he becomes involved in the labor movement. What more can be said about a book that starts with the words, "You Chump!"?

ERNEST POOLE

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Read by Tom Weiss

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